

Message Text

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43

ACTION SS-25

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FM AMEMBASSY CAIRO

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C O N F I D E N T I A L CAIRO 1317

EXDIS

FOR THE SECRETARY FROM AMBASSADOR

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: EAID EG US

SUBJECT: DISCUSSIONS WITH EGYPTIAN GOVERNMENT ON FY 76
AID LEVEL

REF: STATE 24726 AND 26021; CAIRO 1278

1. MET WITH HEGAZI THIS MORNING TO INFORM HIM IN STRICT
CONFIDENCE OF OUR INTENTION TO PROPOSE A \$300 MILLION LEVEL
OF ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE FOR EGYPT IN FY 76. POINTED OUT PRE-
PARATIONS FOR CONGRESSIONAL PRESENTATION MUST BE COMPLETED
BY AID BY MARCH 2 AND STRESSED THE NEED KEEP ABOVE FIGURE
CONFIDENTIAL UNTIL LEGISLATION IS ACTUALLY SENT O CONGRESS
LATER IN MARCH. I PROMISED INFORM HIM WHEN THIS HAS TAKEN
PLACE AND ASKED PRIMIN TO INSTRUCT ALL MINISTRIES TO COOPERATE
WITH US TO DEVELOP A DEFENSIBLE AND WELL DOCUMENTED PROGRAM.
I ADDED THAT LAST YEAR, BECAUSE OF NEWNESS OF PROGRAM AND
LACK OF DEFINITIVE INFORMATION, WE HAD HAD TO MAKE WHAT WAS LARGELY
A NOTIONAL, ILLUSTRATIVE PRESENTATION. THIS YER WE WILL BE EXPECTED TO

COME UP WITH SOMETHING MORE PRECISE AND WELL DOCUMENTED.

2. HEGAZI EXPRESSED HIS APPRECIATION. IN SOMEWHAT PRO FORMA
FASHION, HE SAID HE HAD HOPED THAT THE FY 76 PROGRAM WOULD
BE MUCH LARGER. I REMINDED HIM THAT WE ARE ALREADY
PROPOSING AN INCREASE OVER LAST YEAR'S PROGRAM. WE SHOULD
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ALL RECOGNIZE THAT, DESPITE EGYPT'S ACKNOWLEDGED NEEDS,

THERE IS A LIMIT TO ITS ABSORPTIVE CAPACITY IN ANY GIVEN PERIOD OF TIME. HEGAZI DID NOT PRESS THE POINT.

3. HEGAZI THEN ASKED IF THIS INCLUDED PL 480 FOOD AID. I SAID IT DID NOT. THIS WILL HAVE TO BE DETERMINED NEXT YEAR IN THE LIGHT OF THE CROP AND CONGRESSIONAL ALLOCATIONS FOR PL 480 PURPOSES. HEGAZI RECALLED THAT SECRETARY BUTZ, DURING LATTER'S VISIT TO CAIRO THREE MONTHS AGO, HAD STATED THAT AN ALL OUT EFFORT IS BEING MADE WITH AMERICAN FARMERS TO GO FOR A BUMPER CROP NEXT YEAR. SHOULD THESE HIGH EXPECTATIONS MATERIALIZE, SECRETARY BUTZ HAD ALSO INDICATED INTENTION ASSIST EGYPT WITH MORE PL 480 FOOD HELP. HEGAZI HOPED THIS WILL BE THE CASE.

4. HEGAZI ASSURED ME THAT THE \$300 MILLION FIGURE WILL BE KEPT CONFIDENTIAL. HE WILL, HOWEVER, MENTION IT TO MINISTER TAHIR AMIN, WHO IS CHARGED WITH COORDINATING PROJECTS PROPOSED BY VARIOUS MINISTRIES. IN DOING SO, HE WILL INSTRUCT AMIN TO KEEP FIGURE STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL AND TO WORK WITH OUR AID PEOPLE TO DEVELOP THE NEEDED PROGRAM AND JUSTIFICATION. AMIN IS IN FACT ALREADY DOING SO.

5. I WILL ALSO INFORM FAHMY WHEN I NEXT SEE HIM.
EILTS

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